

Sinclair Browning

Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

January 15, 2014

Reviewing Officer
USFS Southwest Region
333 Broadway SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Re: Objection to Rosemont Copper Project FEIS

Dear Sir or Madame,

I would like to enter this letter as a formal objection to the FEIS done by the United States Forest Service for the Rosemont Copper Mine project, located within the Coronado Forest District of Pima County, Arizona. Jim Upchurch is the forest supervisor for this district and the responsible official for this project.

As I stated in my previous letter of objection to you (#8937) I am very concerned about the impact the mine will have on my well. While your FEIS attempts to answer that concern in your #364 Response, I find that response totally inadequate. You state "The Forest has not analyzed impacts to individual wells" and in the Groundwater Quality section of the FEIS you confirm that the mine will remove water from the regional aquifer and will, in fact, lower groundwater levels an additional 5-10' each year it is in operation. In the Socioeconomic section of your report you state that the mine will affect well owners for 100-140 years and that drawdowns "are likely," "water availability could be impacted," and that these impacts could cause local residents "uncertainty and discomfort in their current quality of life."

Really? A dry well resulting in an uninhabitable, worthless property will have far greater impacts than "uncertainty and discomfort" in our quality of life. Try devastating personal and financial ruin, the result of a governmental agency allowing a foreign company to steal our lifestyles, take our water and our dreams while pillaging the country for economic gain. How do you quantify that? How do you defend not conducting adequate assessment of the economic and mental damage that will be thrust on individual U.S. citizens because of the commercial efforts of a Canadian firm?

In a further insult to those of us who are living close to the proposed mine

you suggest that we can “mitigate these effects by enrolling in the well protection program implemented by Rosemont Copper.” I don’t know what kind of Kool-Aid you folks have been drinking, but that’s a bit like putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. Have you seen the well protection program that was offered to the property owners in Singing Valley North, the residential subdivision closest to the mine? It offers a pump warranty program and a well-deepening component. We could all have brand new pumps, very deep wells and no water. Your suggestion for mitigation is woefully inadequate, insulting, and insensitive to those of us who may very well lose our life savings if this mine goes through and our wells become drawn down or dry, and our properties become worthless.

Just the prospect of the mine has already had a damaging effect on real estate in the Sonoita area. My property has been on the real estate market for almost three years. It is now listed at a price that is a fraction above what I paid for it over 10 years ago and is \$75, 000 below an independent real estate appraisal done in 2008. While I had a very low offer last year (below what I paid for the property in 2003), during the time I made a small counter offer the prospective buyer went on a tour offered by Rosemont Mine. He immediately withdrew from all negotiation (including my offer to accept his original low offer) because of his concern on the effects the mine would have on the property and its water supply.

While representations have been made about the number of jobs that will be offered if the Rosemont Mine goes through, I have seen nothing that relates to the financial ruin and heart break that many of us face who have the misfortune to be affected by this proposed project. If Rosemont is so enthused about the appropriateness of their well agreement, then why don’t they buy all of these clearly affected properties and then they can draw down their own wells to whatever degree they want?

As a remedy to the above, the USFS should conduct independent, credible, and quantifiable studies of the effects of well drawdowns and water loss of the neighboring residential wells that will be affected by the Rosemont Mine. If these studies suggest a deleterious effect on neighboring residential properties, then the owners should be fully compensated for that loss.

Sincerely,

Sinclair Browning